

LBP students (unofficially) blow a world record



By Brock Weir

They came, they chewed, they conquered ? at least unofficially.

Students of all ages from Lester B. Pearson Public School, their teachers, parents, and people from the surrounding school community came together on a rainy night last Thursday to attempt to set the world record for the largest number of people in one place at one time all blowing bubbles with chewing gum.

As the numbers were crunched well into Thursday evening by teachers and volunteers, including Aurora Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, the numbers were released Friday and, pending a final review by the Guinness Book of World Records people, they set the record.

As students and volunteers worked hard over the last few weeks getting ready for the Lester B. Spring Fair, kids throughout the building practiced their bubbles ? in some cases for the very first time ? in the joint effort to take Guinness by storm.

They needed at least 540 people to do it, and as the soggy, dripping masses of people filed back into the school after they were observed from the roof of the building by Mayor Dawe, adjudicators, and photographers ? and a camera hoisted far above the crowd by the Central York Fire Services ? they came back in with a sense of accomplishment.

They were led into a ?LBP? formation on the field by marshals taking them out in groups of 50 to be double sure about the number of people taking part in the competition. As they took their places, students got in a few practice bubbles ? large, deliberately small, and anything in between ? for the road.

?I'm excited, I've only practiced one time and I'm pretty good,? said Elizabeth, getting ready to head in with her classmates, before adding with a laugh: ?My friend is ashamed because he can't blow a bubble and, well, we're the cool people!?

Piper shared her excitement.

?I think it is going to be really cool to actually try and make it into the record book,? she said.

Added Breanna: ?It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to get into the Guinness World Record books.?

As the groups were ushered onto the mucky field, parents stood on the sidelines, covertly blowing their own bubbles in case they were drafted in at the last moment to fill out any gaps or push the numbers over the top, including Malcolm, whose daughter Alex is in Grade 6.

?I think [the value of this] is to have fun, be with their friends, and show their school spirit,? he said. ?If they do set the record, my daughter is going to be pretty proud and have a story to tell her grandparents.?

Waiting for the moment of truth, Principal Arin Otis stood on a bench at the front of the formation, as a t-shirt cannon was loaded to fire some much needed dry garments into the crowd for when it was all over.

?This has been one of the best picnics,? said parent Louise Dyer as the ballots were counted and participants dried off in the school's corridors. ?Even though we've had one of the worst weathers, we have been coming to this school for nine years now and this is the second time it has rained this badly, but it has been one of the best.?

Asked how the view was from up top looking down at the record beaters, Mayor Dawe took some time before heading into help make the tabulation.

?I think everybody is crazy!? he said of the people he saw from above with a chuckle. ?This is obviously a very good school community.?